

## Message Text

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73

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HEW-08 SCI-06 AID-20 OIC-04 AF-10

ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01 ABF-01 TRSE-00

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1761

INFO USMISSION UN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG

SUBJ: GENEVA GROUP (WMO) SESSION SEPT 19, 1973

1. GENEVA GROUP(WMO) SESSION SEPT 19 CHAIRED BY US  
AND ATTENDED BY ALL MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS EXCEPT ITALY. THE  
MEETING WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY EXPERTS, WHO ARE IN GENEVA  
FOR THE WMO EC SESSION.

2. THE AGENDA CALLED FOR A FOLLOW-UP ON THE REPORT OF THE  
GENEVA GROUP WORKING PARTY ON THE WMO. THE DISCUSSION  
CENTERED ABOUT THE TWO MAIN POINTS OF THE REPORT: A) CURRENCY  
OF THE WMO BUDGET AND B) PERIODICITY OF WMO BUDGET.

3. CURRENCY OF THE WMO BUDGET: AUSTRALIA FAVORED  
MAINTENANCE OF BUDGET IN DOLLARS AND CONTESTED CLAIM THAT  
70-80PERCENT OF WMO EXPENDITURES PAID IN SWISS FRANCS, STATING  
THE P LEVEL SALARIES PAID IN DOLLARS AND THIS CONSIDERABLE SUM,  
ALONE, WOULD REDUCE 70PERCENT FIGURE. FRANCE, NOTING THAT BUDGET  
EXPRESSED IN DOLLARS BUT MAJOR PORTION OF EXPENDITURES IN  
SWISS FRANCS, EXPRESSED OPINION THAT ONE CURRENCY SHOULD  
BE USED AND AS WMO LOCATED IN SWITZERLAND, SWISS FRANC  
PREFERABLE UNIT OF CURRENCY. THE FRG, WHILE ADMITTING THAT  
MAJOR PORTION OF EXPENDITURE IS IN SWISS FRANCS, SAID THAT NOW  
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IS NOT THE TIME TO CHANGE. CANADA CITED THE NEED FOR

COMPATIBILITY WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM AND AGREED WITH THE FRG THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIGHT FOR A CHANGE. THE BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE AGREED THAT IT WAS NOT THE RIGHT TIME TO CONSIDER A CHANGE. JAPAN FELT THAT THE RELATIVE STABILITY OF THE SWISS FRANC WEIGHED IN FAVOR OF A CHANGE AND STATED THAT THEY COULD SUPPORT SUCH A CHANGE. SWITZERLAND HAD NO OBJECTION TO HAVING THE WMO BUDGET EXPRESSED IN SWISS FRANCS, BUT THOUGHT THAT SUCH A MOVE SHOULD BE GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BECAUSE IT MIGHT SET A PRECEDENT FOR OTHER AGENCIES. A MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION WOULD TEND TO MAKE THE SWISS FRANC AN INTERNATIONAL CURRENCY - AN UNDESIRABLE SITUATION, AS THE SWISS FRANC LACKS THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATION TO SERVE AS SUCH. THE UK EXPERT SAW THE MAJOR PROBLEM AS BEING ONE OF SUPPLYING WMO WITH THE EXTRA FUNDS NECESSITATED BY SHORT-FALLS CAUSED BY CURRENCY REALIGNMENTS. HE NOTED THAT A DECISION ON THIS MATTER CAN ONLY BE MADE DURING THE NEXT WMO CONGRESS IN 1975. HE FELT THAT THE EC WOULD NOT ACT DURING THIS SESSION, BUT WOULD POSTPONE THE MATTER UNTIL THE 26TH SESSION, AT WHICH TIME THE WORLD MONETARY SITUATION MIGHT OBVIATE THE NECESSITY OF MAKING A DECISION. THE US STATED THAT THE PROBLEM IS A SYSTEMWIDE ONE AND NOTED THAT IT IS ON THE UNGA AGENDA. WITH THIS IN MIND THE US WOULD NOT WANT TO SEE WMO TAKE PRECIPITATE ACTION ON THIS ISSUE.

4. PERIODICITY OF WMO BUDGET: THE FRENCH EXPERT EXPRESSED A REFERENCE FOR THE PRESENT FOUR-YEAR BUDGETARY CYCLE. THE AUSTRALIAN EXPERT, CITING THE GREAT FINANCIAL BURDEN THAT WOULD BE PLACED ON WMO IF A CONGRESS WERE TO BE HELD EVERY TWO YEARS, STATED HIS COUNTRY'S PREFERENCE FOR MAINTAINING THE PRESENT FOUR YEAR CYCLE. HE NOTED THAT THE WMO CONSTITUTION HAS PROVISION FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS, WOULD THIS EVER BE NECESSARY. CANADA STATED THAT ALTHOUGH IT WOULD NOT BE IN CONFORMITY WITH THE REST OF THE UN SYSTEM, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO KEEP THE FOUR YEAR CYCLE, BECAUSE OF THE EXPENSES THAT WOULD BE INVOLVED IN MORE FREQUENT CONGRESSES. THE FRG EXPERT NOTED THAT THE PRESENT FOUR-YEAR CYCLE REQUIRES PLANNING FOR SIX YEARS AND THIS IS THE SOURCE OF MANY OF WMO'S PRESENT PROBLEMS. HE FELT THAT THE PRESENT RATE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE MAKES IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO PLAN SIX YEARS AHEAD. CONSIDERING THE ABOVE AND THE DESIRABILITY OF ACHIEVING COMPATIBILITY WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM, THE FRG WOULD BE SLIGHTLY IN FAVOR OF CHANGING TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A TWO-YEAR CYCLE. NOTING THE COST TO WMO OF HOLDING A CONGRESS EVERY TWO YEARS, JAPAN WOULD FAVOR MAINTAINING THE PRESENT CYCLE, BUT THEY COULD ACCEPT A CHANGE. THE SWEDISH REPRESENTATIVE SAID THAT HIS COUNTRY COULD ACCEPT A TWO-YEAR CYCLE. THE US EXPERT SAID THAT A GREAT DEAL MORE STUDY IS REQUIRED BEFORE ANY DECISION IS MADE ON CHANGING THE PRESENT CYCLE. THE MEMBERS EXPRESSED GENERAL OPPOSITION TO ANY MOVE TO ESTABLISH A DUAL SYSTEM COMPRISING A QUADRENNIAL TECHNICAL CYCLE AND A BIENNIAL

BUDGETARY CYCLE.BASSIN

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